



Photo by Staff Sgt. Josef Cole

Returning to Shaw from Operation Iraqi Freedom with other members of 9th Air Force Sunday was Capt. Richard Johnson, 9th Air Force Public Affairs officer. He was welcomed home by his 6-year-old daughter, Grace (left), 3-year-old son, Spencer (right) and his wife, Jackie (far right).



Photo by Staff Sgt. Lee Watts

Above, Staff Sgt. Brian Carpenter (center), 20th Maintenance Operations Squadron, is reunited with his 19-month-old daughter, Makayla (right) and his wife Angie (left). Brian returned from OIF with members of the 20th Component Maintenance Squadron Wednesday.

# Welcome Home



Photo by Staff Sgt. Josef Cole

Left, Maj. Gen. Larry Twitchell (left), 9th Air Force commander's mobilization augmentee, greets Lt. Gen. T. Michael Moseley (right), 9th Air Force/Central Command Air Forces commander, upon his return to Shaw Sunday.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shirley Howcroft

Left, Col. Sam Angelella (far left), 20th Fighter Wing commander, welcomes Maj. Karen McMeekin (center), 609th Combat Plans Squadron, as she and other members of 9th AF return to Shaw from



Photo by Staff Sgt. Lee Watts

Above, Airman 1st Class Adrian Noffsinger (left), 20th CMS, and Airman 1st Class James Jessie (right), 20th CMS, have cake provided by the Family Support Center celebrating the unit's return Wednesday.

# Mother's Day gifts: make them personal

By Adriene M. Dicks  
*Correspondent*

It's that time of year again. Sunday is the day to show mom just how special she is and say thank you for all she does. But, when the time comes to decide on the Mother's Day gift you are sure she will be so happy to have, you draw a blank. Not to worry; there are many options, and buying a gift is not always the answer.

Before deciding which gift would be best for mom, grandma or auntie, stop and think about who this mom is and the kind of things she likes. Maybe, she is a working mom who likes a little time to herself after work but cherishes the time she spends with her children. Maybe, she is a stay-at-home mom who spends just about all of her time doing things for her family. Maybe, you are the husband of a new mom who spends many nights up with the baby while you sleep. Maybe, she is a grandmother who doesn't get to see her children or grandchildren very often because of the distance between them. Or, maybe the gift is for a mother figure in your life. Every mother is different, and if given a little thought, Mother's Day gifts can reflect that.

**Moms and cards**

For some mothers, the Mother's Day card is the most important part of their gift. Why? Because a carefully chosen card can be something mom keeps for years to come and pulls out to read time and time again whenever she feels nostalgic. Take the time to choose a card that tells mom how you feel. There are cards decorated with floral designs in pastel colors with sentimental words meant to touch mom's heart – and some that may even make her cry. For the people who express themselves well with words, there are blank cards. These decorative cards with no words on the inside leave ample space for a personal message. For the mom who is technologically inclined, an e-card is also an option. Some are animated and come with music. Like

blank cards, e-cards are also a way to send a personal message, but they don't last the way traditional Mother's Day cards do. For a younger child, making a card is always an option. Even though it may be made with construction paper, crayons and glue, mom knows it's from the heart, and it will probably be added to the many things you give her that she keeps for years to come. If a teenager wants to give mom a hand-made card, there are computer card programs available. These programs allow family pictures and other personal touches to be added.

**Quality time**

Whether the mother works outside the home or inside, one her favorite things to do might be to spend time with her children. Mother's Day can be a day to give mom undivided attention free from cooking and cleaning. The day can start with breakfast in bed. Younger kids should get a big brother or sister or dad to help them out. It will make mom's day for the pampering to start before she even gets out of bed. This is also an idea for the expectant mother who may enjoy any moment she can stay off of her feet.

Spending quality time with mom may also be a time for arts and crafts. Make mom a coupon book filled with coupons for things to be done for her, like cleaning up the kitchen, cutting the grass, bringing her a cup of coffee or tea, or just taking the time to play a game or have a one-on-one conversation with no interruptions.

Eating out on Mother's Day can add stress to what is supposed to be a stress-free day, due to crowds and long lines. Instead, try making mom her

favorite dinner at home. Moms who usually do all the cooking may even want to be involved in the preparation to add to the time spent together with their children.

But, what if mom lives far away? It is still possible to spend some quality time with her. Send mom a package filled with her favorite things as well as family pictures and items from the past she will remember. When calling her to wish her a happy Mother's Day, you may want to use a pre-paid calling card because the time spent talking about memories may go on and on.

**Shopping for a gift**

When buying mom a gift, flowers and candy are not the only options. Creativity can also be used in buying a gift. Try giving mom a basket filled with the things she loves. Maybe taking a bath is one of mom's favorite ways to relax. Fill a basket with soaps, bubble bath, scented candles and new book to read while she floats her cares away. Maybe

mom enjoys doing arts and crafts. Select a project she will love and supply all the necessary equipment to get it done. Decorate the basket with ribbons and tissue paper in her favorite colors.

Maybe jewelry is high on mother's list of things she loves to receive. It may be expensive to get her something she will really like, such as a ring or pendant containing the birthstones of all her children.

This may be the year for siblings to pool resources and buy mom a gift that will let her think of you each time she wears it.

Whatever the gift, remember the time and thought put into choosing the gift is just as important as the chosen gift.





# Military spouse pursues performance career

**By Adriene M. Dicks**  
*Correspondent*

It may be assumed that in military families, only one spouse has a career while the other finds jobs wherever the servicemember is stationed. But, there are some military spouses who have not let moving around the world keep them from realizing dreams of their own careers.

Cristina Grieco-Kang, wife of Capt. Donne Kang, 77th Fighter Squadron pilot, has not let the military lifestyle keep her from the career for which she trained. She has a degree in Musical Theatre and Vocal Performance from Eastern New Mexico University.

“I have been singing and dancing since I was a little girl, and I always knew this is what I wanted to do,” said Grieco-Kang. “My father was in the military, and before I met my husband, I always said I would never marry someone in the military.”

When Grieco-Kang met her husband, who was stationed at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., she had been accepted to New York University to continue her education in performance. She did not leave but finished her degree at ENMU.

According to Grieco-Kang, her family has always been supportive of her chosen career path, but questioned her not going to NYU when she started dating someone in the Air Force.

“My parents questioned what I could possibly be giving up by not going to New York,” said the thespian. “Their feelings changed when they saw how supportive Donne was of me continuing my education toward my chosen career.”

After dating for a year, he got orders to Korea and the fighter pilot and thespian got married. Grieco-Kang joined her husband in Korea after a

year and continued her training in performance there. She studied with vocal coach Kim Sung-Hee and taught music.

Grieco-Kang has performed in multiple productions here and abroad. Her credits include the role of Mable in *Pirates of Penzance*, Michelle in *Carmen*, Laurie in *Oklahoma!* and Sister Angelica in *Suor Anglelica*. She also performed a solo with the Amarillo Symphony and competed in various competitions, including the Metropolitan Opera Young Artist Competition.

According to Grieco-Kang, it was difficult in the beginning to change what was in her mind for the future of her career but believes God sometimes changes the plans, and that is the path that must be followed. Now, a part of her plan is her eight-month-old son, Colin. She says her support system here allows her to continue performing.

“I normally have a home day-care provider when I have rehearsals, but the wives in the (77th Fighter) squadron are always volunteering whenever I need it,” said Grieco-Kang.

She is currently playing the role of Emma Carew in a production of *Jekyll & Hyde* at The Town Theatre in Columbia. She has been rehearsing for the part for three months -- her husband has been deployed for the past two.

“Donne is usually around for half of my performances and deployed for the other half,” said Grieco-Kang. “I am hoping he will return before this production is over.”

*Jekyll & Hyde* is set to begin tonight at 8 p.m. Grieco-Kang will appear in performances tonight, Wednesday, May 16, 22, 24, 28 and 30 at 8 p.m. and a 3 p.m. matinee May 18. She shares her lead female role with Jennifer Gagnon. The theater is



Courtesy photo

**Grieco-Kang will play Emma Carew in the Town Theatre's production of *Jekyll & Hyde*. The play is set to begin tonight and will be performed various days and times through May 31.**

located at 1012 Sumter St. Tickets are \$15 for adults; \$13 for senior 65 and older, active-duty military and full-time college students; and \$10 for children under 18. For a complete schedule of the show dates and times or to make reservations, call The Town Theatre at **(803) 799-2510**.

# Take a trip without taking leave

By Staff Sgt. Alicia Prakash  
Staff writer

Being “in the hole” or having few days of leave accrued is reason enough to believe a vacation may not be in the near future. Even with little or no days of leave, adventures are just a Tours and Entertainment office away.

Tours and Entertainment sponsors group trips ranging anywhere from casino cruises in Little River, S.C., to baseball games in Atlanta.

“The casino cruise is our most popular trip,” said Dani McGrew, 20th

Services Squadron Tours and Entertainment manager.

Trip critiques are available for travelers to give their recommendations for improving an existing trip or adding a new one.

The cost of the group trip includes travel and admission. For overnight ventures, hotel expenses are also included. Club Shaw members receive a 10 percent discount on trips by presenting their club card.

Volunteers drive the buses for the group trips

and receive free or discounted fares. McGrew said squadrons wanting to take a trip, may use the Tours and Entertainment buses and a driver, if one is available.

If a traveler wants a personalized trip, Tours and Entertainment can assist in planning it. They can arrange airline tickets, hotel and rental car reservations.

A military voucher program is used at Tours and Entertainment that gives good military discounts, said McGrew. The voucher is beneficial for hotel expenses.

“We are a travel agency,” said Joann Alvarez, 20th Services Squadron travel agent.

Just as civilian travel agencies help clients to coordinate trips, Tours and Entertainment does the same for Team Shaw.

Tours and Entertainment carries discount tickets for several attractions in the region: Darlington Raceway, Carowinds and Riverbank Zoo are among many. A price list for these and others is available at the Tours and Entertainment office located in the community center. They are open Mondays – Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call Tours and Entertainment at 895-4774.

## *Trips and tours for this quarter*

*May 10-11-Charleston Dinner Cruise, Charleston, S.C.*

*May 24-Sun Cruz Casino, Little River, S.C.*

*May 24-Atlanta Braves vs New York Mets, Atlanta, Ga.*

*June 7-Atlanta Braves vs Pittsburgh Pirates, Atlanta, Ga.*

*June 14-Concord Mills Shopping, Charlotte, N.C.*

*June 21-Sun Cruz Casino, Little River, S.C.*

*Reservation deadlines are the day before each trip.*



# Spirit Spotlight



## Airman 1st Class James A. Martin

**Organization:** 20th Equipment Maintenance Squadron

**Duty title:** Intermediate avionics technician

**Hometown:** Greenfield, Ind.

**Time in service:** One year, seven months

**Off-duty interests:** Playing basketball, soccer and working out

**In his own words:** “Learn how to be happy with what you have while you pursue all you want.”

